

The First Linkous in Virginia: German Soldiers in the Revolution

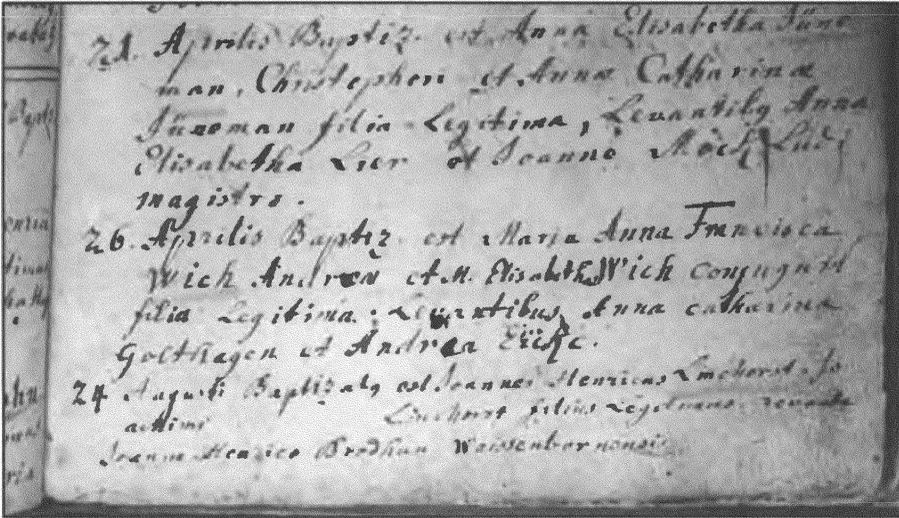
CLOVIS E. LINKOUS

In early 1776 Duke Charles I of Brunswick¹ “recruited” an army of more than 5,000 men to be rented to the British to help them suppress the rebellious colonies in America. One of the recruits was Heinrich Linckorst, a native of Weissenborn, Germany, a small agricultural village in the Dukedom of Brunswick. The area, commonly known as Eichfeld, has a continuing strong and proud Catholic cultural identity. The Linckorst family name in this village dates back as far as 1542.

Duke Charles’ efforts to raise an army inadvertently produced one of Southwest Virginia’s well-known and prolific families. The Linkous family now numbers more than 8,500 members (including female lines), a third of them still living in Virginia, and a goodly number still living in the neighborhood where Heinrich settled in America, between Blacksburg and Prices Fork in Virginia’s Montgomery County. The story of Heinrich Linckorst, later known as Henry Linkous, and how he came to Virginia is a story of both the American Revolution and the origin of an American family. As an infant, Heinrich was baptized at the Roman Catholic Church on August 24, 1744, in St. Martin’s Church of Lüderode, Germany. (Today, the village is consolidated as Weissenborn-Lüderode.) We know little else about his personal life before and during his military experience, but much is known about the travels, assignments, and travails of his regiment. This article presents his regiment’s story, which is, in large measure, his story too.

German Troops in British Service

The story begins with George III, King of England and a member of the House of Hanover in Germany. George III was the first Hanoverian born and bred in England and the first to take a real interest in the British kingdom and its American colonies. He sought to assert the power



The Church Book of St. Martin's Catholic church of Lüderode, Germany. The year for this page is 1744. The baptismal record of Heinrich Linckorst is the last one on the page.

In Latin: 24 Augusti Baptizatus est Joannes Henricus Linckorst, Joachimi Linckorst filius Legitimus, levanti Joanne Henrico Brodhun Weissenbornensi. Translated: On the 24 August was baptized Johannes Henricus Linckorst, legitimate son of Joachim Linckorst, sponsor Johannes Henricus Brodhun from Weissenborn.

of the king and instituted a "get tough" policy. To promote British trading interests and keep peace with the Indians of the Ohio Valley and the Great Lakes, he forbade in 1763 "all of our loving subjects" of the 13 colonies to settle west of a line running along the summit of the Alleghenies. George III also sought to raise taxes in the colonies to pay for his wars in Europe and the defense of the colonies. The colonies resisted, leading to the American Revolution. There was unanimous agreement in the British government that troops should be sent to quell the revolt in the colonies, but a debate centered on what number of troops could be raised and where they could be found. The English army was too small, and, accordingly, the government decided to hire foreign troops. After negotiating unsuccessfully with Russia, the British government turned to German princes and negotiated individual contracts with

six of them. Duke Charles I, sovereign of Brunswick, supplied 5,723 officers and men, including Heinrich Linckorst.

German soldiers, and thus young Heinrich, received payment individually from British funds, the same amount paid by the British to their own soldiers. Additionally, their prince was paid approximately \$50 per year for each soldier in service.

Recruiting the German Troops

Whether Heinrich Linckorst was a voluntary or involuntary recruit is not known. In their recruiting, the princes enlisted men from inside as well as outside their states. Forcible recruiting was officially forbidden. However, recruiting officers were active all over Germany, and records exist of instances where enlistment was involuntary. Scarcely one-half of the recruited armies were composed of real subjects of the six crowns.² Schiller, a contemporary German poet, wrote of the practice:

It is true a few saucy fellows stepped out of the ranks and asked the colonels how much a yoke the prince sold men; but our most gracious master ordered all the regiments to march on to the parade ground, and had the impertinent shot down. We heard the crack of the rifles, saw their brains spatter the pavement and the whole army shouted, 'Hurrah! To America.'

Seume, another German writer who was himself forcibly recruited, wrote: "Persuasion, cunning, deception, force — all served. No one asked what means were used to the damnable end. Strangers of all kinds were arrested, imprisoned, sent off."

Heinrich Linckorst may have been a raucous, rowdy, eager-for-battle volunteer, or a philosophical thinker advocating that governments rule with the consent of the governed. More probably, his personal outlook lay somewhere between these extremes. While we do not know his outlook and have no record of his point of view, his later abandonment of his army unit in America gives us a clue.

From Germany to Quebec, Canada

The overall British plan for North America was for the army of General Sir Henry Clinton to invade the southern states; General Sir William Howe's army to occupy New York City; and that of General John Burgoyne to clear Canada and then march southward, to meet

General Howe, who was marching northward, at Albany, New York. The Brunswickers were assigned to Burgoyne's army and mission, joining seven regiments of English troops.

The Brunswick troops departed from their homeland in two divisions roughly a month apart. Four surviving journals³ record almost daily entries about the Brunswick troops. The first group of 2,280 men left Wolfenbüttel on February 21, 1776, and marched to Stadt, where they boarded 13 ships and sailed down the Elbe River to Gluckstadt. There they waited until March 21 for favorable winds. After five days of sailing, they were in sight of the English coast. On April 6, 36 ships containing German troops, horses, and equipment sailed from Portsmouth, England, for Quebec, Canada. During the voyage, a fleet of 40 ships with English, Irish, and Scottish troops, also destined for Canada, overtook them. The combined convoy of 76 ships arrived at Quebec on June 1, 1776.

The second group of 2,018 men, which included Heinrich Linckorst, marched from Wolfenbüttel on March 21, 1776, under the command of Colonel Johann Friedrich Specht. The Dutch ship, the *Vriesland*, with about one-fifth of Specht's command aboard, sailed into the Elbe River near the city of Stadt at Cuxhaven; it joined 15 ships filled with German troops and sailed for Portsmouth, England, on June 2, arriving at its destination 10 days later. At Portsmouth, a larger convoy was formed for the voyage to Quebec. The convoy included the battleships *Amazon* and *Garland*, which carried no troops or munitions but provided protection for the fleet. Two large troopships, the *Vriesland* and the *Lively*, had the best accommodations for the officers, and Colonel Specht and his staff were on the *Lively*. The troops from Specht's regiment, Heinrich Linckorst's unit, were on the *Vriesland*, which carried 444 troops and officers from Stadt to Portsmouth and 375 from Portsmouth to Quebec. The ship displaced 800 tons, and its deck area measured 120 feet long by 28 feet wide. According to the diary of a *Vriesland* passenger from Stadt to Portsmouth:

The men sleep below the deck in the first hold in three tiers of berths, one above the other, and, in a space of 10 feet square, 6 men lie abreast. Because of the foul air, the men cannot endure a whole night in this narrow space, and, when the air holes must be closed during storms sickness is to be feared. The Dutch beer is good, but the fare bad, our people having received peas cooked in pure water without fat or salt.

At 7:00 A.M., the drum beats for worship, for which the people gather on the fore deck. Although no one is forced to attend, neither officers or men stay away, and all stand there with uncovered heads, solemnly singing, with visible devotion.

Twenty-four days out of Portsmouth, the *Vriesland* and a smaller troop ship became separated from the fleet. After the *Garland* had searched for the missing vessels for half a day without success, the fleet proceeded without them.

By August 16 the fleet, still missing the two ships, reached the Grand Banks of Newfoundland and paused to fish for cod. Two weeks later, it reached the mouth of the St. Lawrence River and found the smaller, lost troop ship awaiting the fleet, but not the *Vriesland*, which had sailed alongside her until the night of July 21, when they became separated. The *Lively* arrived at Quebec, hoping to find the missing *Vriesland*, but such was not the case. By September 19, all ships but the *Vriesland* had arrived at Quebec.

The missing *Vriesland* is clearly the ship to which General Frederika Adolph Baron von Riedesel, German commander of the Brunswick troops, refers in his memoirs as “the ship with 350 men which had become separated since 7 weeks past.” Von Riedesel’s memoirs also report that 19 men of this second group died on the sea journey. Private Linckorst was one of the survivors.

The Armies Move South

The armies in Canada soon saw action. General Carleton won a naval engagement on October 11, 1776, at Valcour Island in Lake Champlain, New York, a battle in which General Benedict Arnold led the losing American side. Even in defeat, however, Arnold adroitly succeeded in so delaying the English armies that the plan to move south to meet Clinton as he moved north had to be delayed until the spring of 1777, a delay that proved fatal to the grand strategy of the British. The newly arrived troops from Europe went into winter quarters on October 18, 1776, at Three Rivers (Trois-Rivieres), Quebec.

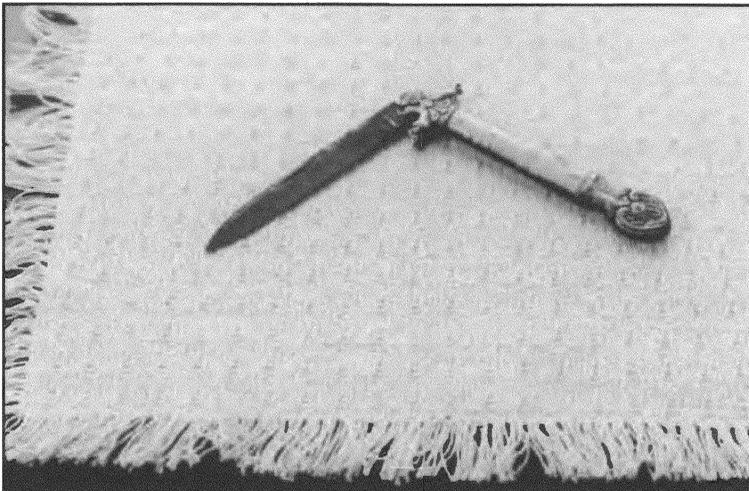
During the winter, General Burgoyne had been in England, where he complained about Carleton’s leadership and successfully petitioned that he replace Carleton as supreme commander. In May 1777 Burgoyne assumed supreme command from General Carleton and prepared to lead

the forces southward, leaving Carleton in command of three English regiments and 650 Germans at the garrison in Quebec.

Finally, in early June, the army of around 10,000 soldiers began moving southward. Included in Burgoyne's army were four regiments of German Brunswick soldiers: the Prinz Frederick, the von Riedesel, the Rhetz, and the Specht. The troops moved against the northward flow of the Richelieu River as the army proceeded south to the northern shore of Lake Champlain. Navigating and portaging around the rapids and falls in the river with all their military gear was a major undertaking. Mosquitoes nearly drove the men crazy before they reached the Cumberland Bay of Lake Champlain on June 18. From there they moved down Lake Champlain in 300 flat bottom boats. By late June English and German troops and a substantial number of Indians arrived at Crown Point, New York. The army prepared to attack Fort Ticonderoga, which was defended by 5,000 colonists. The plan of attack called for the German General von Riedesel to proceed down the east side of the lake and the English General Phillip down the west side. But no battle ensued. The Americans strategically abandoned the fort with its stores on July 1.

A Family Heirloom

A Linkous family heirloom traces its beginnings at about this point. General John Burgoyne's saddle broke, and Heinrich Linckorst was asked to repair it. As a reward for Heinrich's excellent service, Burgoyne gave him a fancy pocket knife. The knife has been passed down in the family



An Open View of the Burgoyne-Linkous Knife

through seven owners and is currently owned by a Radford, Virginia, descendent. Unfortunately, only an oral family tradition traces the knife to its origin.

The Saratoga Campaign⁴

On July 10, two weeks before the entire German contingent arrived at Whitehall, New York, a skirmish broke out in the town. By late July the Braunschweiger troops were camped at Fort Ann, New York. In early August they moved south past the high ground that separates the northward flowing waters from the southward flowing Hudson River. They had a lengthy, exhausting time moving their loaded wagons over this natural obstruction of bogs and mountains.

In mid-August Colonel Friedrich Baum was dispatched with German troops to capture needed supplies from an American base at Bennington, Vermont, but he was defeated, and 700 troops from von Riedesel's command were killed, wounded, imprisoned, or missing. Baum died of wounds suffered in the battle. Heinrich Linckorst's company did not participate.

In the meantime, another strategic thrust was under way that was to have an important bearing upon the surrender of Burgoyne's army in just two more months.

Lt. Colonel Barry St. Leger had left Montreal in July with a force of 1,000 Indians and 750 soldiers, including a company of German troops. They proceeded via the St. Lawrence River, Lake Ontario, the Oswego River, and Oneida Lake to Fort Stanwix, which was defended by an American militia of 700 men. St. Leger's mission was to rejoin Burgoyne. He was to capture Fort Stanwix and proceed down the Mohawk River to attack American General Horatio Gates from the west while Burgoyne attacked from the north. But before St. Leger reached Fort Stanwix, friendly Oneida Indians warned the Americans of St. Leger's impending attack. About 800 American militia from the Mohawk Valley were assembled to help defend Fort Stanwix. Mohawk Indians were then sent by St. Leger to ambush the Americans at Oriskany. The Americans prevailed and St. Leger eventually retreated toward Canada.

The victories at Bennington and Oriskany greatly encouraged the Americans, producing a flood of volunteers for General Gates. His ranks quickly swelled to 15,000 men facing Burgoyne's army directly and 9,000 more Americans in the general area.

The Battle of Freeman's Farm, which occurred on September 19, 1777, left Burgoyne's army in bad shape. They were fatigued and essentially cut off, and 800 soldiers were patients in field hospitals. Burgoyne's outposts were constantly attacked. He had rations left for only 16 days and was outnumbered four to one. He had no word from the British forces in New York City, now commanded by General Clinton. Actually, General Clinton had sailed up the Hudson River from New York City in 32 transport ships with the intent of rescuing Burgoyne at Saratoga. But, after reaching within 40 miles of Albany around October 7, they turned back because they were too late. Burgoyne's fate had already been determined.

At an October 4 council of his generals, Burgoyne had been advised to fight or retreat immediately. Three days later, with 1,500 troops, he reconnoitered the American left flank, was attacked, and was forced to retreat. It is likely that Heinrich Linckorst was in this action since it is known that the leader of his regiment, Colonel Johann Friedrich Specht, was captured at that time.

Burgoyne Surrenders His Army

On October 8, Burgoyne retreated to Battenkill, in desperation leaving behind his sick and wounded. His army spent two days camping on the heights of Saratoga, searching unsuccessfully for an unblocked way across the Hudson River to the east side. On October 12 he decided to retreat up the west side of the Hudson. Meanwhile, the Americans had crossed to the west side the previous night and cut off this line of retreat as well. On October 14 Burgoyne concluded that he must surrender and began negotiations with General Gates.⁵ The generals signed a treaty, which was not an unconditional surrender, on October 16. Included in the treaty were ten articles, the most important of which for Burgoyne's troops was Article 2, which granted them passage to England on the condition that they serve no more in the war. The defeated soldiers were to embark from Boston.

The troops left Albany to march to Boston. The English troops took a northern route and the Germans a southern route. The weather was bad, and the soldiers suffered from sickness, fatigue, and the exposure that resulted from worn-out clothes and shoes. They also faced unfriendly townspeople along the way before arriving at Cambridge on November 7, 1777.

Crude barracks, erected by the Americans in the 1775 siege of Boston, awaited the defeated soldiers in Cambridge. The 2,000 English troops were housed in barracks on Prospect Hill, and the 1,900 German troops stayed in the barracks on Winter Hill.⁶ Troops captured at Bennington, who did not fall under the surrender terms, were imprisoned separately at Westminster and Rutland, Massachusetts. The weather made conditions severe for the soldiers. The barracks had not been prepared for them, and they found the furnishings of the barracks consisted solely of a little straw and some wood.

British transports that had arrived in December 1777 to remove the troops to England were sent away because the Continental Congress would not approve the surrender treaty. The Congress took issue with a defect in Article 2; namely, that it did not include a provision that would prevent these defeated soldiers from simply replacing troops serving garrison duty in Europe. For the price of two trips across the Atlantic, one army could be replaced by another.

Facing a longer stay than they had anticipated, soldiers deserted by the hundreds. By April 6, 1778, the deserters included 655 English and 119 Brunswicker troops. The officers of both the English and the Germans eventually gave permission for soldiers to hire themselves out for a few miles around to local farmers. In the spring of 1778, the German surgeon J.F. Wasmus was boarding in a residence on the outskirts of Springfield, Massachusetts, under terms of his honor-system parole. He obtained a leave to provide medical services to the Brunswicker prisoners on Winter Hill in Cambridge. There he found that the soldiers had lost all hope of embarking for England and that desertions continued. He also learned that Burgoyne, on parole since March, had returned to England to defend himself before Parliament. The British government directed the general to return to America to satisfy his parole terms, but he refused on grounds of ill health. He was ultimately exchanged in 1782 for a large number of Americans held prisoner by the British.

Prisoners Transfer to Charlottesville, Virginia

In the fall of 1778 German General von Riedesel learned that the "Convention Prisoners," as they became known, were scheduled to march to Charlottesville, Virginia, in early November. New England found it too difficult to provide their food and shelter and Virginia was better able to deal with their needs. The tattered clothing of the prisoners had

been worn from Quebec to Saratoga, from Saratoga to Cambridge, and for a year in prison. The leaders appealed to British General Clinton in New York for warm clothing for the soldiers to make the fall/winter march to Virginia. Clinton supplied them with blanket material, clothing, and new shoes. Colonel Theodoric Bland (1742-1790) was the American in command of escorting the Convention Troops to Virginia and would command the barracks at Charlottesville for the next year.

The march began in six divisions, three English and three German. Those unable to march remained in a hospital in Cambridge. Two divisions left each day along the same route, with an English division in the lead. The troops were not allowed to converse with Americans along the road.

In 20 days, the marchers reached the Hudson River. This part of the trip was considered high risk because British General Clinton had a large army in New York City, a mere 60 miles down river. In fact, Clinton attempted a rescue, but it failed due to his late arrival and the maneuvering of General George Washington. Nonetheless, a few hundred English soldiers escaped and joined Clinton.

The marchers continued to Everittstown, New Jersey, crossing the Delaware River into Pennsylvania on December 13 and arriving at Littlestown, Pennsylvania, on Christmas Day. The first of the Germans reached Loudoun County, Virginia, on New Year's Eve and slept in a woods in a foot of snow. Continuing into Virginia, they passed through Leesburg, Culpeper, and Orange and arrived at Charlottesville on January 14, 1779. Severe weather welcomed them to their destination, barracks located about four miles northwest of Charlottesville.

The soldiers faced a situation worse than they had endured at Winter Hill. The food that had been stored for them had spoiled. The log barracks, far from ready for occupancy, had no fireplaces, no furnishings, no doors, and no floors. Huge cracks between the logs had not been caulked. The inadequate facilities had resulted from a mix-up in the construction plan. A Colonel Harvie, who had contracted to build the barracks, had gone to a session of the Continental Congress at Philadelphia. He had left the preparations to his brother, who had procrastinated, claiming the prisoners were not due until spring. The huts, each intended to house 14 privates, were 22 by 14 feet. They were enclosed in a high, 1,000-foot-long palisade with a north and a south gate. Heinrich Linckorst and his comrades set to work to finish constructing their own quarters,

and within a few months the barracks were more presentable. Later, they added such embellishments as a theater, a coffee shop, and a cold bath.

The officers had the choice of erecting their own hut outside the compound or moving to Staunton, Virginia, 42 miles away. Sixteen officers elected to rent quarters in Staunton, and the remaining men decided to build themselves a "hut" that included space for a food garden. Fortunately for the prisoners, warm weather arrived early that spring. Trees bloomed by mid-February, and the Germans planted early gardens. But misfortune struck in April when a killing freeze forced the Germans to replant their gardens.

Thomas Jefferson Supports the Prisoners

Some of the local citizens wanted the soldiers removed to another location, but the Germans acquired a powerful friend in Thomas Jefferson, who lived nearby at Monticello. Jefferson, who became a close friend of an adjutant to General von Riedesel, wrote Governor Patrick Henry arguing that the agitation of the Charlottesville populace to remove the prisoners was not wise.

The barracks occupy the top and brow of a very high hill. They are free from bog, have four springs, which seem to be plentiful. Of four thousand people, it should be expected, according to ordinary calculations, that one should die every day. Yet, in the space of nearly three months, there have been but four deaths among them; two infants under three weeks old [The officers had had their families with them throughout the marches and battles since Quebec.] and two others by apoplexy. The officers tell me, the troops were never before so healthy since they were embodied. The officers, after considerable hardships, have all procured quarters, comfortable and satisfactory to them. In order to do this, they were obliged, in many instances, to hire houses for a year certain, and at such exorbitant rents as were sufficient to tempt independent owners to go out of them and shift as they could. These houses, in most cases, were much out of repair. They have repaired them at considerable expense. They have generally laid in their stocks of grain and other provisions, for it is well known that officers do not live on their rations. They have purchased cows, sheep, etc., and set into farming, pre-

pared their gardens, and have a prospect of comfort and quiet before them.

To turn to the soldiers; the environs of the barracks are delightful, the ground cleared, laid off in hundreds of gardens, each enclosed in its separate paling; these well prepared, and exhibiting a fine appearance. General Riedesel alone laid out upwards of two hundred pounds in garden seeds for the German troops only. Judge what an extent of ground these seeds would cover. Their poultry, pigeons and other preparations of that kind, present to the mind the idea of a company of farmers, rather than a camp of soldiers. In addition to the barracks built for them by the public, and now very comfortable, they have built great numbers for themselves, in such messes as fancied each other; and the whole corps, both officers and men, seem now happy and satisfied with their condition.

A British Lieutenant Anburey, himself one of the prisoners, wrote in his diary:

The Germans are fully content, being upon the same pay as the British troops, which is near four times as much as they receive in their own country, and for what reason it is impossible to say, but the Americans show more indulgence to the Germans, permitting them to go round the country to labor, and being for the most part expert handicrafts, they realize a great deal of money, exclusive of their pay, and as the generality of the German troops are only soldiers raised for the war, and upon their return to their own country, will become persons of property.

It can be assumed, then, that Heinrick Linckorst's life had improved greatly from his days of confinement in Cambridge.

Throughout the war, the Americans had encouraged the prisoners to switch sides and join them on the side of freedom. Handbills in German that circulated among the prisoners contained the text of an August 14, 1776, Act of the Continental Congress. The act explained the noble cause of the revolution and promised free land to any German soldier who would join the American cause. The invitation was renewed by the Congress in 1778 and again by Virginia Governor Thomas Jefferson in 1781. The amount of land awarded varied from 1,000 acres for a colonel to 50 acres for a private. The terms became more generous as the war

progressed. Jefferson promised no required military service and no war taxes and added two cows to the offer. The program proved effective: by August of 1780, only 1,147 of the 1,900 Germans who had surrendered at Saratoga remained in custody.

The Cornwallis Threat

Before resuming the story of Henry's life in America, let us reveal how the remnants of the German Convention Army returned to Germany. In midyear 1780, the army of British General Charles Cornwallis was moving rather freely in North Carolina and eastern Virginia. There was considerable concern that he would move on Charlottesville and free the Convention Prisoners. To lessen the possibility, the English Convention Prisoners were marched from Charlottesville, Virginia, to Fort Frederick, Maryland. Virginia and Maryland had agreed that if Maryland would take the prisoners, Virginia would pay half of their keep. But Fort Frederick lacked enough shelter for both the English and the German prisoners. The English were removed from Charlottesville first because the colonists feared they would more likely break out of the barracks and join their army. Jefferson wrote Washington on November 26, 1780, that the Germans showed little disposition to join the enemy. Consequently he proposed that they remain in their present quarters until something further could be done with them.

On February 20, 1781, Colonel Woods wrote Governor Jefferson that he had issued orders for the immediate march of the Convention Troops to Winchester, Martinsburg, and Warm Springs without baggage. Woods said that the Germans had been without a meal for six days and that they had only a very small quantity of beef remaining. He reported that conditions at Fort Frederick were equally bad and that the fort would not receive the Germans. On February 21 the Germans departed from Charlottesville, ending just over two years at "The Barracks." In early March, Congress took the final step of annulling the treaty of surrender by separating the officers from the noncommissioned officers and privates. At Winchester in June, a great deal of concern existed for the security of the 1,600 prisoners because of Cornwallis' presence just east of the Blue Ridge.⁷ On June 4, 1781, the troops of British officer Banastre Tarleton had raided Charlottesville, burned the Albemarle Courthouse, and driven Governor Jefferson from his home. So, removing the prisoners from Charlottesville had been accomplished none too soon.

A fraction of the Convention Troops were marched to Easton, Pennsylvania, and another fraction to Rutland, Massachusetts, around July 1781. Officers were taken to Hartford and East Windsor in Connecticut.⁸ Cornwallis' campaign in Virginia ended with the surrender at Yorktown of his 7,000 soldiers to Washington's 17,000 troops on October 19, 1781, essentially ending the fighting. For nearly two more years, while a peace treaty was tediously negotiated, the Convention Prisoners were quartered in small groups in northern Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New England. Finally, on June 6, 1783, the German Convention Prisoners sailed for home from the Port of New York, more than five and a half years after their surrender. They arrived at Wolfenbüttel on October 8, 1783, following a seven-and-a-half-year tour from which they would never fully recover. Out of 5,723 Brunswickers who had left, 3,015 did not return for one reason or another.

The Henry Linkous Legacy to Montgomery County

Heinrich Linckorst probably left the Charlottesville barracks by August 1779, nine months before May 21, 1780, the date on which a Linkous family Bible says the first child of Henry and Elizabeth Shiflet Linkous was born. Tax and census records reveal numerous Shiflet families in the vicinity of Charlottesville. Heinrich may have worked for one of these families for wages before marrying their daughter. Records of the marriage and identification of Elizabeth's parents have not been found.

Where Henry and Elizabeth lived and what they did between 1779 and 1787 is not known. Eight more children were born to them by 1797. It is likely that they settled far enough into the western mountains to be safe from contact with Heinrich's German officers, who were in and around Charlottesville and would have been a threat to him in what they would have regarded as desertion. It also is not known if he ever cashed in on the government's offer of awards for switching sides.

Four years after the war officially ended, Heinrich's name appeared on a personal property tax record in Montgomery County, Virginia, surrounded by the names of neighbors who are known to have lived in the area between Blacksburg and Prices Fork. In 1799 he purchased from the heirs of the James Patton estate a 200-acre farm where he lived until his death in August 1822. This farm is part of a 7,500-acre grant to James Patton on June 20, 1753, by King George II through his agent, Governor Robert Dinwiddie in Williamsburg. The farm lies on the northeast side



The Henry Linkous Homestead as it appeared in 1980.

of Merrimac Road, a short mile south of the intersection of Merrimac Road with Prices Fork Road. Since 1799 it has never been outside the ownership of descendants of Heinrich. All owners have had the surname “Linkous” or “Kipps.”

Today, a large and beautiful farm house stands on the farm in what is believed to be the original site of the residence in Henry Linkous’ time. It stands in proximity to a natural spring, a logical site for a house in early American times. A part of the house may be seen from the interior to be of log construction, and it is evident that the house has been enlarged. The Kipps sisters, Mae and Florence, great-great-granddaughters of Henry Linkous and life-long residents of the house, personally knew that the log exterior had been weather-boarded in the early part of the twentieth century. They believed the beginning of the house sprang from the hand of Henry Linkous. Larry Linkous, an eighth-generation descendant of Henry Linkous, and his wife Charlotte are the current owners and residents.

Heinrich was 31 years old when he was recruited for military service. It is likely that he was a practicing Catholic for his entire life, be-

cause he was baptized a Catholic and his home village was thoroughly Catholic. But there were no Catholic churches in Virginia in the decades after the Revolution. It must have been somewhat painful to Heinrich that the farm he bought had cut from it four acres that James Patton had promised as a gift to the German Lutheran Church. Did Heinrich switch to the Lutheran faith? Probably not, because his name does not appear even once in the St. Michaels Lutheran church book, which begins with the year 1796. Today the new St. Michaels Lutheran Church, built in 1971, stands on that four acres.

In the German records covering 450 years in Heinrich's German village, we find the surname spelled in many ways: namely, Lindthost, Linthost, Linghorst, Lingkorst, Linckhorst, Linckhorstos, Linckorst, Linkhorst, Linkorst, and Lingkost. Today, in the village of Weissenborn-Lüderode, the spelling is Lingkost.

In American records we find the given name always spelled as Henry. Up to the time of Henry's death in 1822, we find the following spellings of the surname: Linkust, Linkoss, Lincost, Linkus, Lincass, and Lincus. But the lawyer who wrote Henry's will in 1822 used the spelling "Linkous." And so it has been.

According to the inventory of his personal property in the settlement of his estate, Henry was fairly prosperous as working men go. Among other items, he had blacksmith tools, four milk cows, one steer and heifer, three calves, and three horses in addition to a 200-acre farm. Seven of Henry and Elizabeth Linkous' children remained in Montgomery County and raised large families. Henry had 61 grandchildren. In one line of descent from Henry, 11th generation babies were born in 1996 in Montgomery County, and his total descendants to date exceed 8,600. Approximately one-third of those living today live in Virginia.

Endnotes

1. Frederick H. Landgrave, sovereign of Hesse-Cassel, was another such prince out of a total of six. The army he rented to the British amounted to 17,000 out of the overall 30,000 German soldiers. Because of their numbers, American historians have used the term "Hessians" to refer to all the German troops, but it is to be taken only as a code word for all six principedoms.
2. Max von Eelking, a German historian who wrote the memoirs of Major General Riedesel, commander of the Brunswick troops, makes this estimate.
3. Three journals are personal, one official. A personal one by a surgeon has been published as *An Eyewitness Account of the American Revolution and New England*

Life: The Journal of J.F. Wasmus, German Company Surgeon, 1776-1783. It was translated by Helga Doblin and published by the Greenwood Press in 1990. Wasmus was with the first division to leave Brunswick.

The second personal journal, by Colonel Johann Friedrich Specht, covers the second division to leave Brunswick and is available in book form: *The Specht Journal: A Military Journal of the Bourgoyne Campaign*, translated by Helga Doblin and published by the Greenwood Press in 1995.

The third personal journal is by Ensign Ernst Johann Friedrich Schueler von Senden. It begins with the arrival of the Convention Troops in Virginia and ends when he is paroled and returns to Germany. *The Story of the Convention Army*, derived from the journal, has been published by the Albemarle County Historical Society, vol. 43, 1983.

The German general's official record may be found in *Memoirs and Letters and Journal of Major General Riedesel during His Residence in America*, 2 vols., ed. Max von Eelking (Albany, N.Y.: J. Munsel, 1863).

4. For further information on the Saratoga campaign, see Richard M. Ketchum, *Saratoga: Turning Point of America's Revolutionary War* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1997).
5. See *Saratoga: Turning Point of America's Revolutionary War*. Ketchum argues that the British defeat at Saratoga was the "turning point" of the war and "changed the history of the world." The book lists extensive primary and secondary references, many of which serve as sources for the article in hand.
6. Winter Hill may be found today in Somerville, Massachusetts. Take Rt. 16 until it intersects with Broadway Boulevard. Then take Broadway Boulevard eastward to the top of a hill, which is Winter Hill. It is no longer labeled on maps as Winter Hill. Somerville is north of Cambridge and of Boston.
7. See "The Story of Winchester in Virginia," by Morton, 1925. Tarleton's force was a detachment from Cornwallis' army. Henry P. Johnston, *The Yorktown Campaign and the Surrender of Cornwallis, 1781*. De Cap Press: New York, 1971.
8. The Wasmus journal.

